

October 5, 2022

Alliance for Community Engagement (ACE)

Chairman Anthony Doan
State Building Code Council

Dear State Building Code Council:

Thank you for updating building energy codes for commercial and other large buildings last spring. These updates make a significant difference for the City of Vancouver as it pursues its ambitious Climate Action Framework (CAF).

Alliance for Community Engagement SWWA (ACE) is a coalition based in Vancouver, including Washington Environmental Council, Columbia Riverkeeper, Sierra Club Loo Wit, Friends of the Gorge, WA and OR Physicians for Social Responsibility, Sunrise SWWA, and Vancouver Audubon. We are writing to support the State Building Code Council (SBCC) updating residential building energy codes for new construction, this fall.

ACE supports building electrification as the fastest route to decarbonizing our buildings. Vancouver is in the process of adopting a CAF that sets targets of an 80% reduction in community-wide greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs) by 2030, with carbon-neutrality by 2040. The proposed SBCC energy code updates will improve Vancouver's ability to meet these targets. Updating building energy codes is also the most economical pathway for new home buyers, since studies have shown all-electric homes are less expensive to build, maintain and operate. In addition, eliminating heating and cooling from fracked gas increases safety and reduces potential harm from gas, for homeowners and the climate.

ACE strongly urges the SBCC to vote in support of the full package of residential energy code proposals that are out for public comment. In particular, we support the requirements for heat pump systems in new homes and stricter ventilation for gas stoves to protect indoor air quality and health.

Vancouver has experienced a succession of extreme weather events that have put residents at risk. Our City Council has responded with a proposed CAF that addresses climate disruption impacts, including prioritizing building electrification in the transition away from fossil fuels. The SBCC proposed residential energy code updates are supported by both Vancouver's City Council and ACE as a way to move forward and meet our aggressive targets.

Thank you for listening to public input.

Sincerely,

Alliance for Community Engagement SWWA